

To: Interested Parties

From: Global Strategy Group, on behalf of Navigator Research

Re: The FoxHole: The Media Echo-Chamber of Fox News

Date: March 21, 2019

## Navigator Special Release: Stepping Inside the FoxHole – The Media Echo-Chamber of Fox News

*This memo reflects the findings of 1,001 interviews conducted online with U.S. adult confirmed registered voters using a voter-file matched panel. Interviews were completed March 1-4, 2019. Navigator Research is a collaboration between Global Strategy Group and GBA Strategies. You can review our previous release from this survey with findings on the topics of climate change and socialism [here](#).*

**There is an alternate reality in American politics, and it plays an outsized role in the way many experience and form opinions on the most important issues facing the country. Progressives should be mindful of the challenge from the Fox News echo-chamber and how it skews public perceptions. At the same time, there may be opportunities to reach people who aren't in the chamber: Republicans who don't watch Fox News, and non-Republicans who do.**

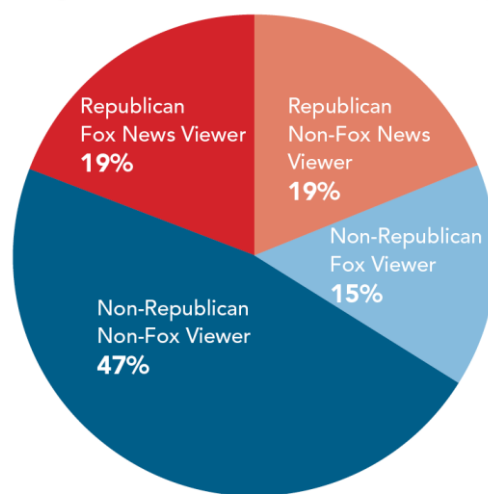
The influence of Fox News Channel is undeniable: from their audience to their biggest promoter, President Trump. A third (34%) of Americans report watching Fox News a few times a month or more. Most of these Americans (19% overall) also identify as Republicans or as Republican-leaning independents.

Crossing this segment with questions covering a variety of issues and topics in the latest Navigator, one thing is clear: where Republican partisan affiliation and the Fox News echo-chamber overlap, there is near unanimity on the politics and even the facts defining the Trump presidency. This is the “FoxHole”. What the Navigator data demonstrates is this particular segment of the public is so vastly different from the rest, it may serve progressives best to focus their attention on everyone else.

### The Persuasion Gap: The FoxHole vs. Everyone Else

While half of Republicans are Fox News viewers and live in this FoxHole, the Republicans who do not watch Fox News (19% of Americans) and Fox News viewers who are not Republicans (15%) – call them the “Media Middle” – are an entirely different

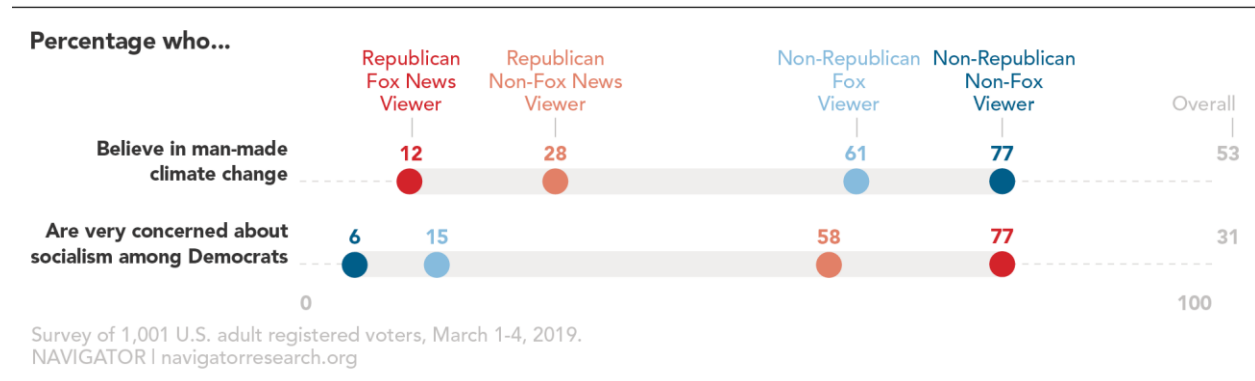
**Party Affiliation & Fox News Viewership**



Survey of 1,001 U.S. adult registered voters, March 1-4, 2019.  
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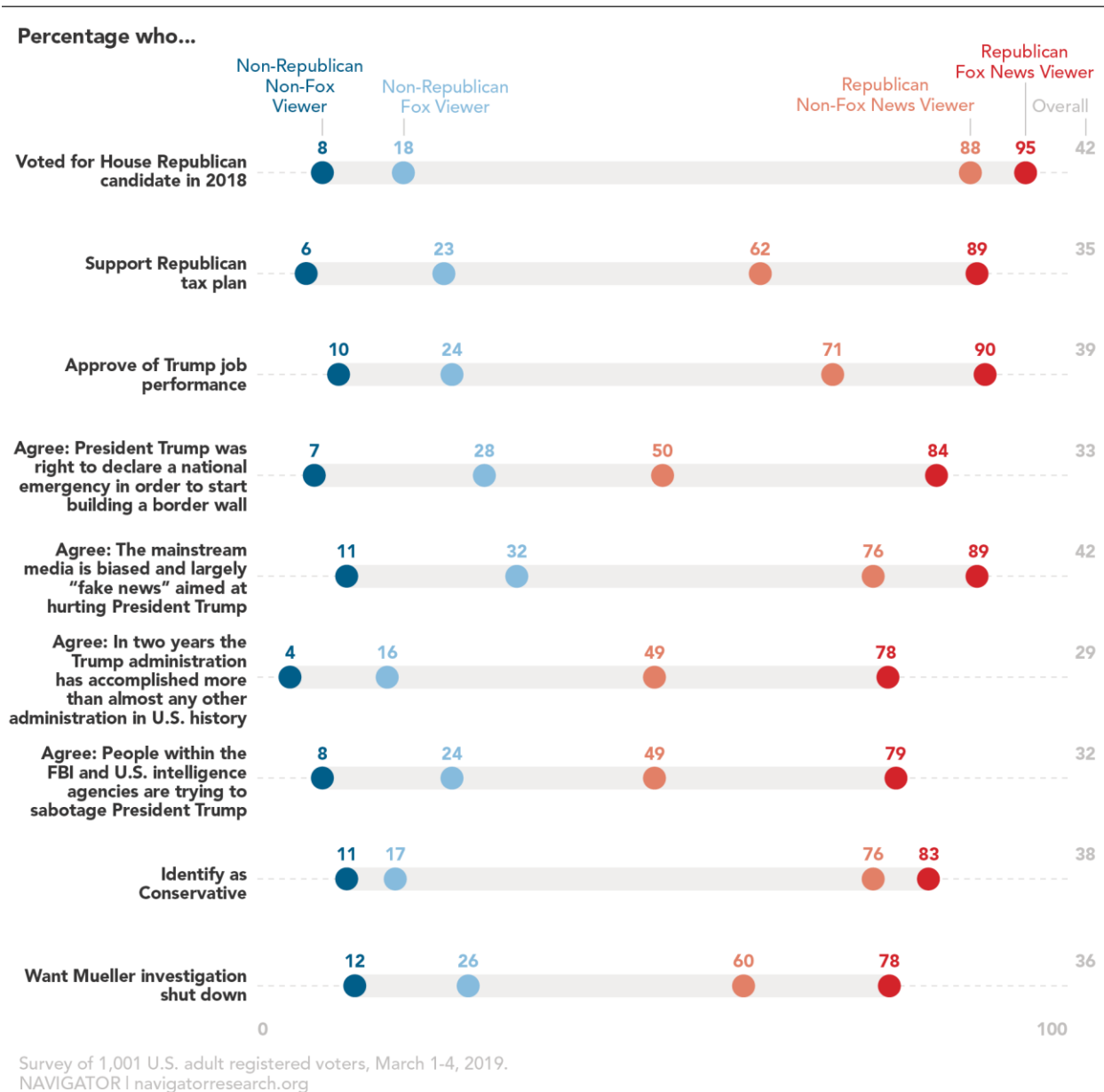
audience, not to mention the remaining 47% of Americans who are neither regular Fox News viewers nor Republicans.

To take climate change, a subject of the latest edition of Navigator, as an example, non-Fox News watching Republicans are twice as likely as other Republicans to believe in human-caused climate change. Similarly, they are also significantly less likely to be concerned about socialism in the Democratic Party.



However, the differences go far beyond this, pervading a host of major issues and topics from the news. In many cases, Fox News-viewing Republicans are vastly different from other Americans, even from other Republicans. So when it comes to Republicans inside the FoxHole, the prospects for making progressive arguments credibly are slim. Consider the following:

- **12%** of those in the FoxHole believe climate change is mostly caused by humans, compared to **62%** of all other Americans (**53%** total);
- **77%** are very concerned about the Democratic Party moving in too socialist a direction, compared to **20%** of all others (**31%** total);
- **89%** express support for the Republican tax law, compared to **22%** of all others (**35%** total);
- **84%** support President Trump declaring a national emergency to start building a border wall, compared to **21%** of all others (**33%** total);
- **20%** support the Special Counsel investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, compared to **67%** of all others (**58%** total);
- **78%** believe the Trump administration has accomplished more than any administration in history, compared to **17%** of all others (**29%** total).



## The Information Gap: The FoxHole's Focus on Progressive Causes

One of the most telling differences between those inside the FoxHole and the rest of the country isn't even about opinion, but instead awareness of certain issues. Americans in the FoxHole are fed a steady media diet of content focused on opposing progressive policies and ideas, and as a consequence, they are highly aware of these ideas – sometimes even more than progressives themselves – resulting in a much faster calcification of opinion among conservatives that drives overall ratings for the policies in a negative direction.

For example, this edition of Navigator asked Americans how much they had heard about the “Green New Deal,” a proposal to address climate change. Americans in the FoxHole are more than twice as likely than all other groups to be hearing “some” or “a lot” about the proposal (69% in the FoxHole versus 32% among everyone else, including just 33% among all Democrats). When evaluating national polling about progressive items like the Green New Deal, it should be acknowledged that opinion can often be driven by this highly aware, but relatively narrow slice of Fox News-watching Republicans.

## **Beyond the FoxHole: Communicating to The Media Middle**

One crucial difference between the two more persuadable groups, or the two halves of the “Media Middle,” is how each one can be reached through non-Fox media. Fox News viewers who are not Republicans tend to also watch other cable news sources, such as CNN or MSNBC, with some regularity, giving progressives an opportunity to reach them with their message. Republicans who are not Fox News viewers, on the other hand, tend to be divorced not just from the Fox News echo chamber, but divorced from all cable news, largely getting their news from national broadcast, local TV, or online news sources instead. In other words: the non-Republicans can still be reached via other cable channels, but Republicans outside the FoxHole require a different approach.